

February 7, 2008

RE: Tamara Morrill v. Central Washington University (CWU)
Allocation Review No. ALLO-07-049

Dear Ms. Morrill:

The Director's review of CWU's allocation determination of your position has been completed. The review was based on written documentation.

Background

CWU's Human Resources Office reviewed your Information Technology Specialist 2 (ITS2) position and determined that it should be reallocated to the Information Technology Specialist 3 (ITS3) classification. However, your supervisor felt that the position description used for the reallocation did not adequately describe your position. On November 15, 2006, CWU's Human Resources Office received a revised position description. By memorandum dated June 8, 2007, CWU determined that your position should be allocated to the ITS3 classification.

On June 25, 2007, you filed a request for a Director's review. You asked that your position be reallocated to the Information Technology Specialist 4 (ITS4) classification.

By notice dated November 15, 2007, Karen Wilcox, Director's Review Coordinator, informed the parties that the review would be considered through written documentation. Ms. Wilcox set an exhibit deadline of January 18, 2008 for the submission of additional documentation. On January 17, 2008, you provided additional documents.

Summary of Ms. Morrill's Perspective

You argue that you function as the lead senior-level specialist for the Student Records, Academic Advisement and Academic Structure modules within the Student Administration system at CWU. You assert that since 2004, you have provided analysis, system design, maintenance, quality assurance, project management, troubleshooting, problem resolution, consulting, data access/retrieval and project and operational problem resolution for your assigned areas.

You contend that you provide consultation campus-wide and apply high-level technical knowledge, discretion and analytical ability when working with end users. You explain that the end users with whom you work include staff within Registrar Services, the President's Office, faculty and students. You assert that you trouble shoot and resolve complex tasks and large scale

projects. You also assert that you are the liaison for your assigned areas when working with CWU's Information Technology Services department and that you represent the Student Administration system at committee meetings, faculty meetings and interdepartmental meetings regarding institution-wide computing policies, standards and philosophies.

You assert that the Student Administration system is not comparable in function, size and responsibility to the Human Resources and the Financial Management systems but that the modules you support are. In addition, you compare the structure at CWU to that of private sector companies and the California State System and assert that CWU fails to recognize the importance of specialist positions. You argue that CWU fails to provide equal pay for positions that perform the same duties and responsibilities and you contend that the decision of whether to upgrade positions is based on management's decision rather than on the actual duties performed by the position.

Summary of CWU's reasoning

CWU argues that you provide independent support of the information system and its users in your assigned areas of responsibility and that you support, maintain and enhance existing applications. CWU explains that the PeopleSoft system utilized at CWU is divided into three components [Student Administration, Human Resources and Financial Management] and that each component is support by several shared employees. CWU asserts that you are responsible for three of the modules related to Registrar Services within the Student Administration component of the system. CWU argues that overall responsibility for CWU's Student Administration system lies with an exempt employee who also functions as the project manager. CWU contends that your assigned areas of responsibility are sub-modules of the Student Administration system and that your functional responsibility does not rise to the ITS4 level.

Director's Determination

As the Director's designee, I carefully reviewed all of the documentation in the file including the duties and responsibilities described in the November 2006 position description form for your position. Based on my review of the documents, the available classifications, and my analysis of your assigned duties and responsibilities, I conclude that your position is best described by the ITS3 classification.

Rationale for Determination

You argue salary inequity as one of the reasons supporting the reallocation of your position. However, salary inequity is not an allocation criterion and should not be considered when determining the appropriate allocation of a position. See Sorensen v Depts. Of Social and Health Services and Personnel, PAB Case No. A94-020 (1995).

You argue that private sector employers and the State of California recognize the level and scope of duties you perform as higher level duties than those found at the ITS3 level. The Personnel Resources Board has addressed the comparison of positions within the state civil service for allocation purposes. In Byrnes v. Dept's of Personnel and Corrections, PRB No. R-ALLO-06-005 (2006), the Personnel Resources Board held that "[w]hile a comparison of one position to another similar position may be useful in gaining a better understanding of the duties performed by and the level of responsibility assigned to an incumbent, allocation of a position must be

based on the overall duties and responsibilities assigned to an individual position compared to the existing classifications. The allocation or misallocation of a similar position is not a determining factor in the appropriate allocation of a position.” Citing to Flahaut v. Dept's of Personnel and Labor and Industries, PAB No. ALLO 96-0009 (1996). Consistent with the Board's determination, the allocation of work by employers outside of the state civil service system is not a determining factor in the appropriate allocation of your position.

The purpose of a position review is to determine which State of Washington civil service classification best describes the overall duties and responsibilities of a position. A position review is neither a measurement of the volume of work performed, nor an evaluation of the expertise with which that work is performed. A position review is a comparison of the duties and responsibilities of a particular position to the available classification specifications. This review results in a determination of the class that best describes the overall duties and responsibilities of the position. See Liddle-Stamper v. Washington State University, PAB Case No. 3722-A2 (1994).

The position description form serves the same purpose as the former classification questionnaire. Both the Personnel Appeals Board and the Personnel Resources Board have held that because a current and accurate description of a position's duties and responsibilities is documented in an approved classification questionnaire, the classification questionnaire becomes the basis for allocation of a position. An allocation determination must be based on the overall duties and responsibilities as documented in the classification questionnaire. Lawrence v. Dept of Social and Health Services, PAB No. ALLO-99-0027 (2000).

Your position description form indicates that you are responsible for the Academic Structure, Student Records and Academic Advising modules of the Student Information System. Your position description form also indicates that you supervise staff that assists in the development, testing, implementation and maintenance of these modules. Your duties include:

- 35% Support and maintain the production environment through data analysis and testing, troubleshooting, analysis to solve complex problems, and quality assurance testing and performance monitoring. Act as a liaison on the development and modification to existing applications. Provide consultation to Financial Aid, Student Financials, and Admission modules, as well as Faculty, Academic Departments, the student body, and the SAEM division on Safari standards, processes, and philosophies. Maintain knowledge of new policies and regulations (including: academic, registration, student financials, curriculum, state and federal reporting guidelines), analyze for potential impact on Student Information Systems; develop and recommend methods for compliance.
- 30% Perform data analysis to ensure data integrity. Develop and maintain logical data models using multi-database systems. Develop applications for maintaining and reviewing and data repository. Train and assist staff using data repository. Manage all technical projects for Registrar Services, such as records digitizing, online catalog project, etc.
- 25% Apply advanced technical knowledge and considerable discretion to evaluate, analyze and test new capabilities; updates and fixes as supplied by vendors;

enhancements, application interfaces and upgrade projects. Coordinate with vendors to resolve complex installation problems or troubleshoot live production issues with the software or application.

- 5% Assess and develop training materials, business process guides, and conduct advanced instruction on the use of Safari. Direct organization and university-wide training including preparing requests for development on instruction where required.
- 5% Act as security gate keeper for SA system in all environments. Reviews new requests and grants security when appropriate. Reviews existing access and implements change when needed to existing permission lists and roles. Provides senior-level experience and knowledge in security consulting for other Safari Modules. Other duties as assigned.

Your supervisor and department head and your appointing authority agree that your position description contains an accurate description of the work you perform.

In Jurgensen v. DOC, PRB Case No. R-ALLO-07-016 (2008), the Personnel Resources Board determined that the following classification specification standards are primary considerations in allocating positions:

- a) Category concept (if one exists).
- b) Definition or basic function of the class.
- c) Distinguishing characteristics of a class.
- d) Class series concept, definition/basic function, and distinguishing characteristics of other classes in the series in question.

The Category Concept for the Information Technology Specialist Occupational Category states:

Positions in this category perform professional information technology systems and/or applications support for client applications, databases, computer hardware and software products, network infrastructure equipment, or telecommunications software or hardware.

This category broadly describes positions in one or more information technology disciplines such as: Application Development And Maintenance, Application Testing, Capacity Planning, Business Analysis and/or Process Re-Engineering, Data Base Design And Maintenance, Data Communications, Disaster Recovery/Data Security, Distributed Systems/LAN/WAN/PC, Hardware Management And Support, Network Operations, Production Control, Quality Assurance, IT Project Management, Systems Software, Web Development, or Voice Communications.

Positions which perform information technology-related work to accomplish tasks but are non-technical in nature would not be included in this occupational category.

This is a broadly written category which encompasses a wide variety of positions that perform professional information technology systems and/or applications functions. Your position fits within the category concept.

At the time of your position review, the IT classes did not contain definitions or basic functions, rather they contained distinguishing characteristics. The distinguishing characteristics for the ITS4 classification state:

Performs analysis, system design, acquisition, installation, maintenance, programming, project management, quality assurance, troubleshooting, problem resolution, and/or consulting tasks for complex computing system, application, data access/retrieval, multi-functional databases or database management systems, telecommunication, project or operational problems.

As a senior-level specialist in an assigned area of responsibility and/or as a team or project leader, applies advanced technical knowledge and considerable discretion to evaluate and resolve complex tasks such as planning and directing large-scale projects; conducting capacity planning; designing multiple-server systems; directing or facilitating the installation of complex systems, hardware, software, application interfaces, or applications; developing and implementing quality assurance testing and performance monitoring; planning, administering, and coordinating organization-wide information technology training; acting as a liaison on the development of applications; representing institution-wide computing and/or telecommunication standards and philosophy at meetings; or developing security policies and standards.

Incumbents understand the customer's business from the perspective of a senior business person and are conversant in the customer's business language. Projects assigned to this level impact geographical groupings of offices/facilities, and/or regional, divisional, or multiple business units with multiple functions. The majority of tasks performed have wide-area impact, integrate new technology, and/or affect how the mission is accomplished.

Complex technical tasks are those that require substantive application of knowledge and experience of a variety of technical procedures, processes, materials and/or equipment to accomplish tasks independently and to decide which rules, processes, materials or equipment to use in order to effectively accomplish work activities. A senior-level specialist utilizes skill above independently performing work assignments and devises methods and processes to meet new and unique work requirements and problems.

You are the assigned specialist for your area of responsibility. You apply technical knowledge and discretion in analyzing, designing, maintaining, troubleshooting and resolving problems. But, as stated in your position description, you coordinate with vendors to resolve complex problems or troubleshoot issues with the application or software. You provide consultation to a variety of end users regarding use of and access to your assigned modules. However, based on the information in your position description, you are not responsible for large-scale projects or conducting capacity planning; designing multiple-server systems; directing or facilitating the installation of complex systems, hardware, software, application interfaces, or applications; or

developing and implementing quality assurance testing and performance monitoring on a system-level as anticipated by the ITS4. Rather, your duties and responsibilities are limited in scope to three modules within one component of the system. You provide training for users of your three components and your responsibility for developing security policies and practices is limited to access to the system. Based on the information in your position description, you do not develop policies and practices for the system as a whole. Your work affects multiple areas of the campus and varied end users, but the scope and impact of your work is limited. While providing support to three modules requires more varied knowledge and expertise than providing support in a single area would require, neither the volume of work performed nor the expertise with which that work is performed are basis for allocation decisions.

In response to your request for review, CWU provided an excerpt from the Human Resource and Student Administration Systems Upgrade Project Charter. The Upgrade Project appears to be a large-scale project which includes an Executive Project Team, a Project Management Team, and two Project Teams. You were a member of one of the two the project teams. You were not the project lead or a team lead. As a member of the project team, you were the Module Lead for Student Records for the Student Administration system. This example shows that you did not have the scope or level of authority for a large-scale project as anticipated at the ITS4 level.

While examples of work are not allocating criteria, a portion of your assigned duties are described in the examples of work for the ITS4 classification. For example, you are responsible for the data repository for your components and you train and assist staff in use of the repository; you act as a liaison on modifications to components of the existing application; and you develop and implement quality assurance testing and performance monitoring. However, as stated earlier, examples of work are not allocating criteria.

While you perform some work that could be performed at the ITS4 level, the preponderance of your work as a whole does not have the breadth, scope or level of impact anticipated at the ITS4 level.

Most positions within the civil service system occasionally perform duties that appear in more than one classification. However, when determining the appropriate classification for a specific position, the duties and responsibilities of that position must be considered in their entirety and the position must be allocated to the classification that provides the best fit overall for the majority of the position's duties and responsibilities. See Dudley v. Dept. of Labor and Industries, PRB Case No. R-ALLO-07-007 (2007).

The distinguishing characteristics for the ITS3 classification state:

In support of information systems and users in an assigned area of responsibility, independently performs consulting, designing, programming, installation, maintenance, quality assurance, troubleshooting and/or technical support for applications, hardware and software products, databases, database management systems, support products, network infrastructure equipment, or telecommunications infrastructure, software or hardware.

Uses established work procedures and innovative approaches to complete assignments and coordinate projects such as conducting needs assessments; leading projects; creating installation plans; analyzing and correcting network malfunctions; serving as system administrator; monitoring or enhancing operating environments; or supporting, maintaining and enhancing existing applications.

The majority of assignments and projects are moderate in size and impact an agency division or large workgroup or single business function; or internal or satellite operations, multiple users, or more than one group. Consults with higher-level technical staff to resolve complex problems.

You support three modules of the Human Resource component of the PeopleSoft application. You also support the users of your three components. You independently perform consulting, maintenance, quality assurance, and troubleshooting in your assigned areas. You provide user guidance using established protocols and request changes to system components to enhance usability. In performing your work, you conduct needs assessments, analyze and resolve problems, monitor and recommend enhancements to the existing system, and support and maintain the components of the existing application. Because you support three modules, your work impacts multiple users and more than one work group.

The majority of your assigned duties and responsibilities are encompassed in the distinguishing characteristics of the ITS3 classification. In addition, your work is consistent with the level of work described in the examples of work for the ITS3. For example, you analyze and assess clients' needs and evaluate the application to determine if requirements are met; initiate change requests; document work flow; and provide information to clients on the capabilities and limitations of the application. You participate in large or complex projects. You identify problems that impact a diverse work group and work with vendors and others to resolve problems. You assess training needs, determine training approaches and develop course materials and instruct users. You implement security policies and standards, identify documentation needs, and create documentation for users. In addition, you support, maintain and enhance three modules that impact the Student Administration component of the application and its varied users.

Your overall duties, level of responsibility, and the scope of your assignments as described in your position description form best fit the ITS3 classification. Your position is properly allocated.

Appeal Rights

RCW 41.06.170 governs the right to appeal. RCW 41.06.170(4) provides, in relevant part, the following:

An employee incumbent in a position at the time of its allocation or reallocation, or the agency utilizing the position, may appeal the allocation or reallocation to . . . the Washington personnel resources board Notice of such appeal must be filed in writing within thirty days of the action from which appeal is taken.

Director's Determination for Morrill ALLO-07-049

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The address for the Personnel Resources Board is 2828 Capitol Blvd., P.O. Box 40911, Olympia, Washington, 98504-0911.

If no further action is taken, the Director's determination becomes final.

Sincerely,

Holly Platz, SPHR
Director's Review Investigator

cc: Traci Klein, CWU
Lisa Skriletz, DOP